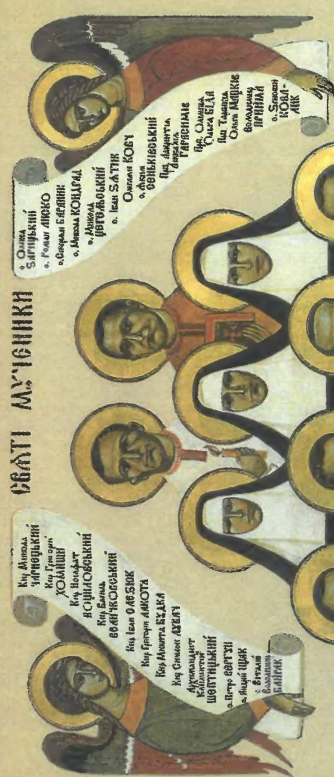


СВЯТІ МУЧЕНИКИ




CHURCH OF THE MARTYRS

The New Saints of Ukraine



"Strengthened by God's grace they travelled the path of victory to the end. This is the path of forgiveness and reconciliation, the path that leads to the brilliant light of Easter, after the sacrifice of Calvary. These brothers and sisters of ours are the representatives that are known out of a multitude of anonymous heroes... who in the course of the twentieth century, the 'century of martyrdom', underwent persecution, violence and death rather than renounce their faith. How can we fail to recall the far-sighted and solid pastoral activity of the Servant of God, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, whose cause of Beatification is proceeding and whom we hope to see one day in the glory of the Saints?"

— from His Holiness Pope
John Paul II's sermon at the
Divine Liturgy of June 27, 2001 in Lviv

 Aid to the Church in Need

Registered Charity No. 1097984
1 Times Square, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 1LF.
Telephone: 020 8642 8668
Website: www.acnuk.org
Email: acn@acnuk.org

ISBN 965-561-345-6



9 789665 161345

The Institute of Church History and
The Catechetical-Pedagogical Institute of
The Ukrainian Catholic University

CHURCH OF THE MARTYRS

General Editor Oleh Turij

Lviv, Ukraine
St. John's Monastery
Publishing Division Svichado
2004

The front cover shows the icon created for the beatification of the Holy Martyrs of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) of the 20th Century, 2001.

The following text was read on June 27, 2001 to the more than one million faithful assembled in Lviv, Ukraine for the official ceremony in which Pope John Paul II beatified these martyrs and other servants of God.

Ц 0304000000-105 Без оголошення
561-2004

© Institute of Church History of the Lviv Theological Academy/Ukrainian Catholic University, concept, text, and editing 2002

© St. John's Monastery, editorial and artistic work and publication, 2002

ISBN 966-561-345-6



Ceremonial procession during the Jordan water blessing, Lviv Market Square, 1931.



Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky with Scouts in Pidliuteti.



Students of the Lviv Seminary, Myroslav Hladiak and Yevhen Kravchuk, Lviv, 1930s.

Holiness in Life

Pope John II's solemn proclamation of the new martyrs and faithful servants of God of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as blessed is another divine manifestation to our people. During more than 1000 years of salvation history on our land, Ukrainian Christians have rejoiced in various signs of God's presence. The Word has become incarnate among us, has been changed into visible sacraments: the healing water of Baptism, the oil of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine of the Lord's paschal feast. They lead us to the divine life. "God is with us!" He has built his house here. Great church councils throughout the ages and quiet little chapels speak to us. The warm and hospitable face of the Lord looks into our souls from childhood. His image is embroidered on our decorative cloths at home. The feasts of the liturgical year sanctify our time, invite us to overcome our lack of faith and our doubts and to feel that we live in the age of the Kingdom of God.

We receive this mercy of the Lord through the blessing of hierarchs and priests, on whose heads we can still feel the warm hands of the martyr-bishops Gregory, Theodore, Josaphat, Nykyta, Gregory, Nicholas, Simeon, Ivan, Basil. We celebrate together with monks and nuns who still today remember the sanctifying righteousness of Sister Josaphata and the "aristocracy of spirit" of the priest and martyr, Clement. They remember these fathers and sisters of their communities – kind, welcoming and, at the same time, brave and constant in the faith. We rejoice with Neonila Lysko, who today can still tell us about the eyes of her good husband, full of troubles, Neonila, who for such a short time was comforted by his close presence ... but his glory will last. Together with Fr. Emilian Kowcz's children who are with us, we pass on his testament of love of neighbour and love of enemy.



Andrey Sheptytsky
dedicates the chapel of
the Lviv Seminary in 1927.

Students of the Lviv
Theological Academy
visiting the monastery of
the Studite Sisters in the
village of Yakotiv, 1935.

Mother Vira Slabadian,
prioress of the Basilian
Monastery in Lviv, with
young orphans, 1930s.

For us and for the world, the universal Church raises them up as examples of holiness, as heavenly friends of the Lord, humble figures of mortal human beings. Yesterday they lived among us or among our parents in our cities and villages; they bravely fought with the greatest tyrants of human history, against wrongs and injustices done to their brothers and sisters. They also struggled with their own imperfections and with the simple worries of daily life. Their presence here and now is, incredibly, still felt.

They walked our streets and rode on our roads, sat on our episcopal thrones and in our confessionals; they gave lectures at solemn conferences and reports from their professorial chairs, they studied in our Theological Academy and seminaries. They probably did not think that the terrible trial of martyrdom and its everlasting crown was waiting for them. They wore priestly vestments and the habits of our religious communities, they heard stirring words from their spiritual directors about self-giving and self-dedication, which we often hear, but receive as something everyday, as an abstraction, something unreal and far away in time and space.

Now their figures are strangely close, visible. Through them, holiness itself is closer. They bring heaven closer to us – sometimes so unattainable heaven, where they have gloriously found their place at the hand of the almighty Father and our creator. And the land on which they walked only yesterday has itself become holier, receiving their hot blood and tortured bodies. Walking on this same earth, we feel the grandeur of this holiness and the depth of this drama, which they lived through and to which the Lord can call you and me.

Finally, we were all called long ago – called to love our neighbour, forgive our enemies, feed the hungry, tend to the wounded, comfort the weary, give hope to the hopeless, die to self in order to live for others. Today on our earth and in our Ukraine there is no lack of opportunities to dedicate yourself to God. Through these martyrs and other blessed whom we are honouring today, the Lord has showed us that for us mere

mortals, who are neighbours, fellow workers or students, relatives and family members, or just friends, for us such accomplishments are possible. God reveals Himself always and everywhere: in the quiet of a monastic cell and in an inspiring sermon in church, among the Siberian snows and in the burning oven of Majdanek, in the joy of motherhood and in the cries of an orphaned child...

Will we be able here and now, and then tomorrow and at other times, to respond to this appearance of our Lord? Are we ready to witness to Christ in everyday life or, God forbid, in the face of mortal danger? We hope in the Lord that this is so. And our first step in this direction is our joyful celebration of these abundant blessings, which have come to us through the solemn glorification of the new martyrs and faithful servants of God. Let us be glad with them and with certainty follow in their footsteps!

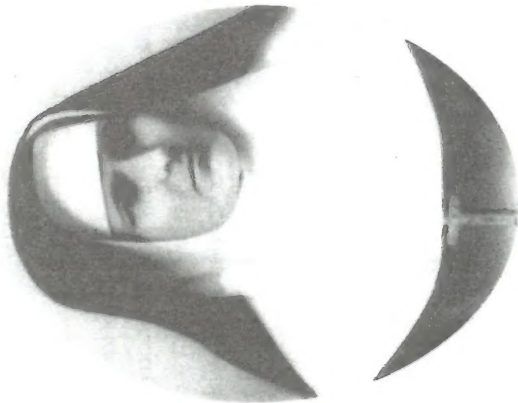
Father Borys Gudziak, Ph.D.
Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University

Sister

Josaphata Hordashevska

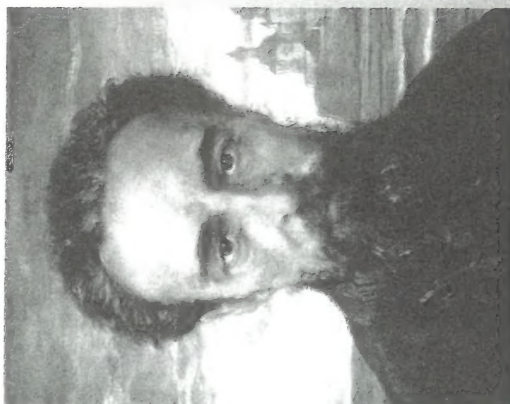
was born into a devout family in Lviv on November 20, 1869. At the age of 18, influenced by the retreats of the Basilian Fathers, she felt the call to consecrate her life to God. Together with Fr. Knyl Selets'kyi, pastor in Zhuzhel, and Father Yeremia Lomnyts'kyi, OSBM, Sr. Josaphata established a new congregation in 1892, the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate, called to an active apostolate among the people. Today the Sisters Servants is the largest female religious community in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Sister Josaphata's holiness showed itself in her total dedication to her calling, in constantly embodying in her life Christ's command to love God and neighbour and in humbly bearing all her difficulties and sufferings.

She died on April 7, 1919 after a long and severe illness, prophesying the day of her death, which she accepted consciously, with prayer on her lips.



"She showed her love for her people through her heart-felt desire to lift them up morally and spiritually: she taught children, youth and women, served the sick, visited the poor and needy, taught liturgical chant and looked after the church's beauty."

- From the testimony of Sister Philomena Yuskiv



Priest and martyr Father

Leonid Feodorov

was born to a Russian Orthodox family on November 4, 1879 in St. Petersburg, Russia. In 1902, he left his studies at the Petersburg Spiritual Academy and went abroad. In Rome he converted to Catholicism. He studied in Anagni, Rome and Freiburg. Contact with Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, had a great influence on Fr. Leonid's spiritual development. On March 25, 1911, he was ordained a Greek Catholic priest. In 1913 he became a monk of the Studite order in Bosnia. After his return to tsarist Russia, in connection with the beginning of World War I he was exiled to Tobolsk, Siberia, because he was a Catholic. In 1917, he was released and appointed head of the Russian Greek Catholic Church, with the title of exarch. His second imprisonment came in 1923, now by the Bolsheviks, for ten years. From 1926 to 1929 he served his term in Solovki and later in exile in Pinieza, Kotlas and Viatka.

He died as a martyr for the faith and church unity on March 7, 1935.

"We expect that the exarch is on the road to glorification through beatification. Of course, it is much too early to talk about this, but all of us were strongly impressed by his holiness, strengthened by the crown of martyrdom and death; this certainly supports our expectations. On the other hand, as a Russian Catholic, as exarch, as someone who died at the hands of the Bolsheviks, it seems to us that he will be right in the centre of attention of the entire Church."

—From Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky's letter to Prince P. Volkonski of May 4, 1935

"O saints in heaven,

who preached the Lamb of God

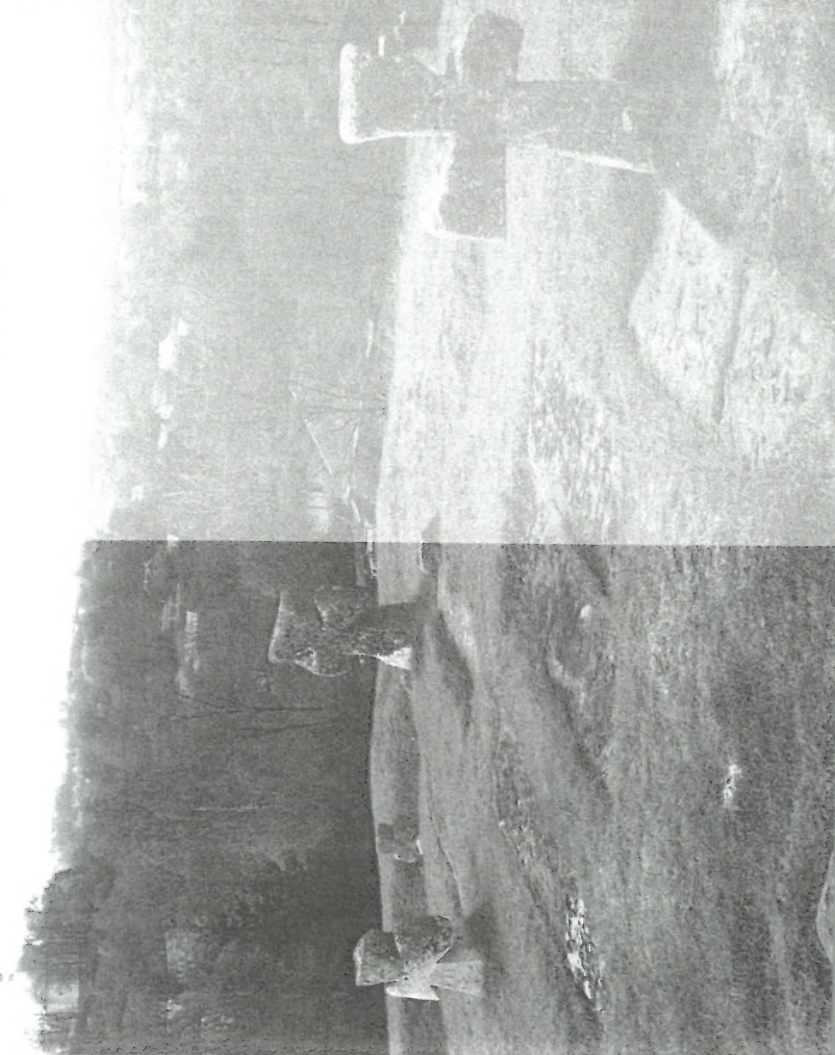
and like lambs were led to the slaughter

and thus passed on to eternal and everlasting life:

O martyrs and saints of God,

pray without cease that our sins may be forgiven us."

From the Byzantine-rite prayers for Good Friday

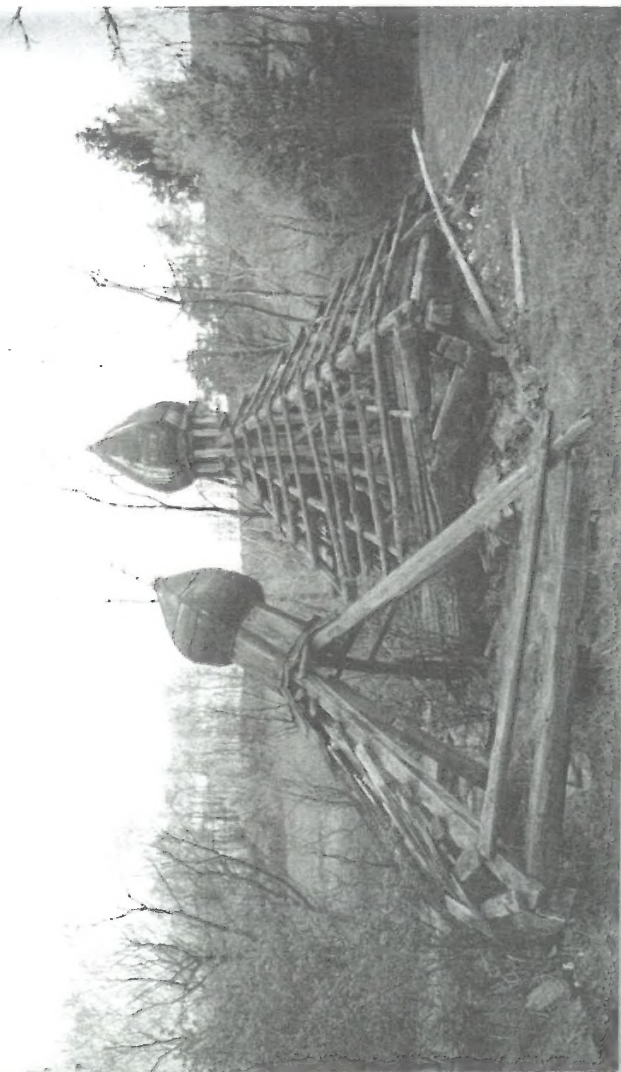


Bloody Unification

Stalin's attack on the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) began immediately after the first occupation of western Ukraine in September 1939. This occupation was in accordance with the Soviet-Nazi Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and lasted until June 1941. In this period, all UGCC property was confiscated, schools and hospitals were nationalized. Church publications and religious organisations were forbidden, religious educational institutions and presses were closed, the activities of religious congregations were limited, brutal atheist propaganda and mass terror and the deportation of a peaceful population began.

"It is absolutely clear that under the Bolsheviks we all felt destined for death; they did not conceal their intention to destroy, to strangle Christianity, to erase its smallest traces."

- From Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky's letter to the nuncio Angelo Ruffi of August 30, 1941



PATRON OF STUDENTS

Priest and martyr Father Nicholas Konrad

was born on May 16, 1876 in the village of Strusiv, Ternopil Region. He finished his philosophical and theological studies in Rome, where he defended his doctoral dissertation. In 1899, he was ordained to the priesthood. He taught in a high school in Berezhany and Terebobyli. In 1929, in Lviv he founded Obnova ("Renewal"), the first Ukrainian association of Catholic students. In 1930, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky invited him to teach at the Lviv Theological Academy and later appointed him to be a parish priest in the village of Stradach, near Yaniv. There, as in previous years, he showed his great diligence and responsibility, fulfilling his pastoral duties, in particular spiritual guidance for youth.

Returning from visiting a sick woman who had requested the sacrament of reconciliation, he died tragically as a martyr for the faith at the hands of the NKVD (KGB) on June 26, 1941 near Stradach.



"Doctor Konrad, a professor at the Academy, my catechist ... O, he was a distinguished person. An ideal man. He was very involved with youth; he had a heart for youth—and for his people. He wanted us to be patriots, to be good and aware students. That was Father Konrad..."

- From an interview with
Father Mykola Martynych

"Fr. Konrad went with the holy sacraments to fulfil his sacred obligation, hearing a woman's confession in the neighbouring village. He felt he had to go, though he was stopped. I know that they stopped him and said: 'Father, don't go. Look what's happening: the war has started, anything could happen.' He said that this was his sacred duty and that he had to go. He got dressed and left, together with Volodymyr Pryima, the cantor. They didn't come back. After a week, they were found there, murdered. People thought something was wrong. So they went to look for them and they found them there. It was awful. The cantor's wife had two children. One was three, the other was four. Momma told how when they were found everyone was overcome by what they saw. The cantor was especially cut up, his chest stabbed with a bayonet many times."

- From an interview with Yuri Skavronskyi



Martyr Volodymyr Pryima

was born on July 17, 1906 in the village of Stradach, Yavoriv District. After graduating from a school for cantors, he became the cantor and choir director in the local church. He took an active part in the life of his parish. Always and in everything he respected human dignity and built his life on the principles of the gospel.

On June 26, 1941, agents of the NKVD (KGB) mercilessly tortured and murdered him along with Fr. Nicholas Konrad.

"As the war began, the priest was taken at Persenkiivka, the neighbouring station. Sometime in the afternoon they took him, detained him until the evening, then they let him go. My dad, because they knew each other well, told him: 'Father, when they let you go, I would advise you to hide for a few days.' It was already clear that the Germans were coming and that the Bolsheviks would be fleeing. 'Hide yourself and we'll survive.' But the priest said: 'Ivan, the shepherd doesn't abandon his flock. And I can't leave my parishioners and conceal myself.' In two days, the military came and took him from his home. It was overgrown there with bushes, some distance from the parish, maybe a half-kilometre. They brought him there and killed him. They shot him in the stomach, and it looked like they also stabbed him with a knife."

- From the testimony of Ivan Kulchytskyi



Priest and martyr Father Andrew Ishchak

was born on September 20, 1887 in Mykolajiv, Lviv Region. He finished his theological studies at universities in Lviv and Innsbruck (Austria). In 1914, he received his Ph.D. in Theology and was ordained. Beginning in 1928, he taught Dogmatic Theology and Canon Law at the Lviv Theological Academy. He was able to combine his professional duties with his pastoral work in the village of Syktyv near Lviv, where he met his death. Even under the threat of great danger he did not leave his parishioners without spiritual guidance. He was faithful to the end.

On June 26, 1941, he died a martyr for the faith at the hands of soldiers of the retreating Soviet Army.

BENEVOLENT PRIOR



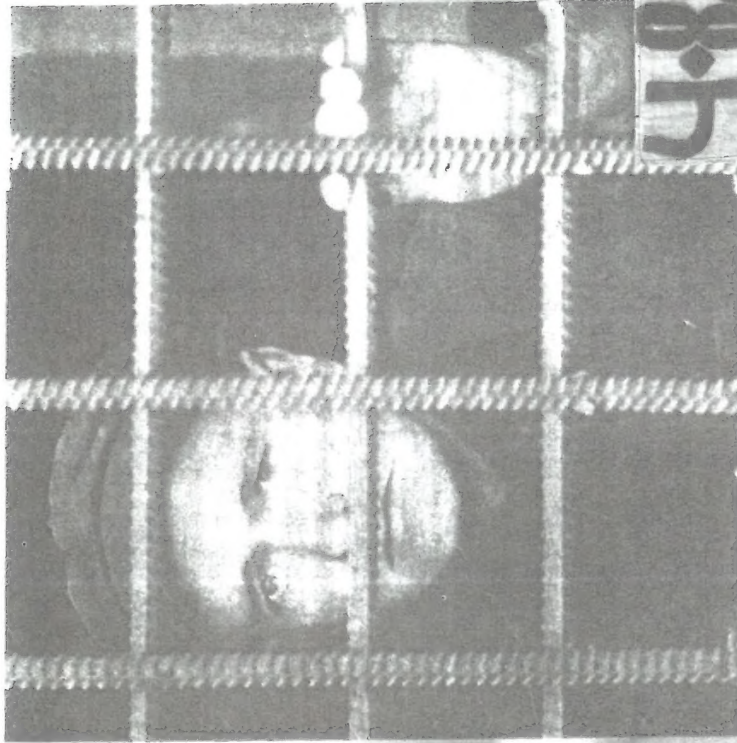
Priest and martyr Father Severian Baranyk

was born on July 18, 1889 in the village of Uhniv. On September 24, 1904 he entered the monastery of the Basilian Fathers in Krekhiv. He was ordained to the priesthood on February 14, 1915. In 1932, he became the hegumen (prior) of the monastery in Drahobych. In life he was noted for his special kindnesses to youth and orphans. He inspired all with his joy and was famous for his preaching.

On June 26, 1941, the NKVD (KGB) arrested him. They brought him to a prison in Drahobych, after which he was never seen alive again. His body, mutilated by tortures, was found among other dead prisoners. He died a martyr for the faith at the end of June 1941.

"Behind the prison I saw a big hole which had been covered up, filled with sand. When the Bolsheviks retreated, the Germans came and people rushed to the prison to find their relatives. The Germans allowed people into the area of the prison in small groups to claim their murdered relatives, but most people stood by the gates. I was a little boy and didn't see anything from the gates, so I went to the side and climbed a tree. There was a terrible stink ... I saw how the Germans sent people to uncover the hole which was filled with sand. The hole was new because the people uncovered it with their hands. They dragged out the murdered bodies. There was a little covering near the hole, and under it I saw the dead body of Father Severian Baranyk. Basilian, with visible marks of his prison tortures; his body had unnaturally swelled, black, his face terrible. Dad later said that on his chest the sign of the cross had been slashed."

— From the testimony of Yosyf Lastoviak



Father Roman Lopatynskyi, Karaganda, Kazakhstan, 1955.



A prison in Drahobych.



Priest and martyr Father

Joachim Senkivskyi

was born on July 2, 1896 in the village of Haii Velyki, Ternopil Region. After completing his theological studies in Lviv, he was ordained as a priest on December 4, 1921. He received a Ph.D. in Theology in Innsbruck (Austria). In 1923, he became a novice in the Basilian order in Krekhiv. After professing his first vows, he was assigned to serve in the village of Krasnopolushcha, and later in the village of Lavriv, in the area of Starosambir. From 1931 to 1938 at St. Onufrius monastery in Lviv he was chaplain of the Marian Society, he ministered to children and youth and organized a Eucharistic Society. In 1939, he was appointed proto-hegumen (abbot) at the monastery in Drohobych. He was arrested by the Bolsheviks on June 26, 1941.

According to the testimony of various prisoners, he was boiled to death in a cauldron in the Drohobych prison on June 29. Because of his righteous life, the faithful held him up as a model of service to Church and nation. He died a martyr for the faith.

"From the first days of his time in Drohobych he became the favourite of the whole town. He gained the affection of the population with his remarkable talent, his ability to speak to scholar and labourer, young and old, and even to the little child. He was always polite, with a warm smile on his face. In your soul you felt that this person had no malice, and, in addition to the impression of humility and dignity, a true servant of Christ was evident."

—From the memories of Father Orest Kuchuk

Priest and martyr Father

Zynovii Kovalyk

was born on August 18, 1903 in the village of Ivachiv near Ternopil. He entered the Congregation of the Redemptorists and on August 28, 1926 he made his religious vows. His philosophical and theological education was received in Belgium. He returned to Ukraine and on September 4, 1937 was ordained to the priesthood. He served as a missionary in Volyn. On December 20, 1940 he was arrested in church while giving a homily.

After terrible tortures he was murdered by the communists in a mock crucifixion against a wall in a prison on Zamarstynivska Street, in Lviv in June 1941. He died a martyr for the faith.



"[His] sermons made an incredible impression on his listeners. But in the prevailing system of denunciations and terror this was very dangerous for a preacher. So I often tried to convince Father Kovalyk ... that he needed to be more careful about the content of his sermons, that he shouldn't provoke the Bolsheviks, because here was a question of his own safety. But it was all in vain. Father Kovalyk only had one answer: 'If that is God's will, I will gladly accept death, but as a preacher I will never act against my conscience.'"

—Fr. Mykhailo Hrynchuk, OSB, Yaroslav Lyubchuk

A New Order

For many western Ukrainians, the beginning of the Nazi-Soviet war on June 22, 1941 meant, first of all, the liquidation of the hated Bolshevik regime. The war led to unfulfilled expectations for the revival of religious freedom and the achievement of their national aspirations. However, it was soon apparent that changing one bloody regime for another would not change the essence of totalitarianism.

"... The terror is growing. During the last two months in Lviv more than 40,000 Jews were murdered. The authorities conducted searches in the church, in my residence and in parts of the monastery ... Two monks were imprisoned, and perhaps there will be attempts to create some 'show trials.' The arrests continue. This is a regime of raving madmen."

— From a letter of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky to Cardinal Eugène Tisserant of December 28, 1942

Nazi soldiers take control of a village in the Dnipropetrovsk region, September 1943.

"The noble Joseph, taking down your spotless body from the wood and wrapping it in a clean shroud with aromatic spices, carefully laid it in a new tomb."

From the Byzantine-rite prayers for Good Friday



RESCUER OF THE DOOMED



"I understand that you are trying to free me. But I am asking you not to do anything. Yesterday they killed 50 people here. If I were not here, who would help them to endure these sufferings? I thank God for His kindness to me. Apart from heaven, this is the only place I would like to be. Here we are all equal: Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, Russians, Latvians and Estonians. I am the only priest here. I couldn't even imagine what would happen here without me. Here I see God. Who is the same for everybody, regardless of the religious distinctions which exist among us. Maybe our Churches are different, but they are all ruled by the same all-powerful God. When I am celebrating the holy Mass, everyone prays. ... Don't worry and don't despair about my fate. Instead of this, rejoice with me. Pray for those who created this concentration camp and this system. They are the only ones who need prayers. May God have mercy on them."

20

Priest and martyr Father Emiliano Kowcz was born on August 20, 1884, in Kosmach near Kosiv. After graduating from the College of Saints Sergius and Bacchus in Rome, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1911. In 1919, he became field chaplain for the Ukrainian Galician Army. After the war and until his imprisonment he conducted his priestly ministry in Przemyśl, at the same time tending to his parishioners' social and cultural life. As an Eastern-rite Catholic priest, he had six children of his own, but despite his family commitments, he was able to devote himself to helping the poor and orphans. During World War II he bravely carried out his priestly duties, preaching love to people of all nationalities and rescuing Jews from destruction. He was arrested by the Gestapo on December 30, 1942. He displayed heroic bravery in the concentration camp and prevented the prisoners sentenced to death from falling into despair.

He suffered a martyr's death in the Majdanek concentration camp on March 25, 1944. He was recognized as a "Righteous Ukrainian" by the Jewish Council of Ukraine on September 9, 1999.

Second Assault

The prospect of the return of the Soviet power to western Ukraine after the defeat of the German Army on the Eastern Front led the hierarchy and faithful of the UGCC to fear for the fate of the Church. All too painful and fresh were the memories of the communists' violence against the faithful during the Soviet conquest of less than two years previous.

"The Bolshevik Army is approaching ... This news fills all the faithful with fear. Everyone ... is convinced that they are destined for certain death."

— From a letter of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky to Cardinal Eugène Tisserant of March 22, 1944



Nun and martyr Sister Tarsykiia Matskiiv

was born on March 23, 1919 in Khodoriv, Lviv Region. On May 3, 1938, she entered the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. After professing her first vows on November 5, 1940, she worked in the convent, sewing clothes for the sisters and teaching the skill to others. Even prior to the Bolshevik arrival in Lviv, Sr. Tarsykiia had made a private oath to her spiritual director, Fr. Volodymyr Kovalyk OSBM, that she would sacrifice her life for the conversion of Russia and for the good of the Catholic Church.

At 8 am on July 17, 1944, Soviet soldiers surrounded the monastery, determined to destroy it. Sister opened the door, expecting a priest who was supposed to celebrate the Liturgy. Without warning, an automatic rifle shot her dead. All her life she witnessed to the authenticity of the consecrated life. She died a martyr for the faith.

"O, Heavenly King,
Comforter,
Spirit of Truth,
Who are everywhere present
and filling all things,
treasury of all blessings
and giver of life,
come dwell within us,
and cleanse us of every stain,
and save our souls,
O Gracious Lord."

Byzantine-rite prayer to the Holy Spirit



"Suddenly the bell at the gate rang. We thought it was the priest. Sister Tarsykiia opened the door, asked Sister Maria for the key to the front door and went to the main entrance. Then a shot rang out and Sister Tarsykiia fell down dead. The soldier who shot her did not really explain why he did it. Later they said that he said he killed her because she was a nun."

Portrait by Sister Tarsykiia Matskiiv, OSBM



"Living in the territory that had been temporarily occupied by German forces.... he wrote an article critical of the Bolshevik Party, which had been published in the anti-Soviet calendar Missionar ["Missionary"] in 1942."

—From the personal file of V. V. Bairak in the archives of the KGB

Priest and martyr Father Vitalis Bairak

was born on February 24, 1907 in the village of Shvalkivtsi, Ternopil Region. In 1924, he entered the Basilian monastery. He was ordained a priest on August 13, 1933. In 1941, he was appointed superior of the Drohobych monastery, taking the place of the recently martyred Father Joachim Senkivskyi. On September 17, 1945, the NKVD (KGB) arrested Fr. Vitalis and on November 13 sentenced him to 8 years' imprisonment "with confiscation of property" (though he had none). In life he was distinguished for his friendliness, his activeness in mission and his preaching. He possessed the gift of spiritual direction.

He died a martyr for the faith just before Easter 1946, after having been severely beaten in the Drohobych prison.

Priest and martyr Father Roman Lyso

was born on August 14, 1914 in Horodok, Lviv Region. He finished his theological studies at the Lviv Theological Academy. Possessing special poetic and artistic talents, he and his wife joyfully conducted youth ministry together. On August 28, 1941, he was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky. He refused to sign a statement of conversion to Orthodoxy, remaining faithful to his Church and his people.

On September 9, 1949, he was arrested by the NKVD (KGB) and imprisoned in Lviv. For years, the family were turned away after trying in vain to find out his fate. Finally in 1956 they were told that he had died of heart paralysis on October 14, 1949. But many witnesses reported seeing him in prison after this date and others said that they heard him singing psalms at the top of his voice. It was reported that he was sealed up in a wall, still alive. He gave his life as a martyr for the faith.



"He was imprisoned on Lontskyi Street. His mother brought him some packages. Sometimes his grandmother came from Zhulychi to visit him. At first the packages were accepted. The prisoner always had the right to thank the giver with the same card with which the package was sent. These cards were always sent back; even the bags in which they usually put the packages were sent back. And there were always those cards, on which he wrote, 'Thank you. Many kisses', and signed it. After the murder of Hulan [a communist agitator], they refused to accept the packages. But after six months, when they started to accept packages again, then the relatives found a card with 'Thanks' and a signature written, but in a stranger's hand. It was a completely different handwriting."

—From the personal file of Roman Lyso in the archives of the KGB

Liquidation by the State

Immediately after the Red Army returned to western Ukraine in the summer of 1944, the previous limitations imposed on the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church were renewed. But the great authority possessed by the whole Church and its head, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, forced the state to avoid a direct confrontation during the earlier years of the communists' return. The war with Nazi Germany was finishing and the spiritual father of the Church and the people, the saintly servant of God Andrey, passed into eternity on November 1, 1944. Then the Soviet security services prepared a special plan "for detachment of parishes of the Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church in the USSR from the Vatican and their subsequent unification with the Russian Orthodox Church." This plan fulfilled the direct order of Stalin and earned him praise. On April 11, 1945, with no proof of guilt, Metropolitan Josyf Slipyi, Bishops Gregory Khomyshyn, Nykyta Budka, Nicholas Charnetskyi and Ivan Liatyshevskyi were arrested. Soon after that, the bishops of Przemyśl, Josaphat Kotsylovskyi and Gregory Lakota, about 500 priests all over western Ukraine, almost all eparchial officials, professors of the Theological Academy and seminaries, the most gifted pastors, they all ended up in prison. With the combined efforts of party and government structures, the police and the Orthodox hierarchy, by means of open terror and false demagoguery, the "liquidation of the Union" was proclaimed in 1946 in western Ukraine in the so-called "Lviv Sobor (Assembly)" and in 1949 in Transcarpathia. Regardless of the persecution, the authorities were not able to break the will of the bishops and to convince even one of them to renounce his Church for a career in the Church of the "regime," the Russian Orthodox Church.

"... Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death ... At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved."

(Gospel of St. Matthew 24: 9-14)

"The universe offers the God-bearing martyrs to You,
Lord, the Creator of nature,
as the first-fruits of creation;
by their prayers,
through the Mother of God,
preserve Your Church in great peace,
O Most Merciful One."

*From the beatification ceremony for the new
Greek Catholic martyrs and blessed, held in Lviv, Ukraine,
and presided at by Pope John Paul II on June 27, 2001.*



Bishop and martyr Gregory Khomyshyn

was born on March 25, 1867 in the village of Hadynkivsi, Ternopil Region. After graduating from the Lviv seminary in 1893, he was ordained to the priesthood. He continued his theological studies in Vienna (1894-1899), earning a doctorate. In 1902, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky appointed Fr. Gregory rector of the seminary in Lviv and in 1904 he was ordained bishop for Stanislaviv (Ivano-Frankivsk). In 1939, he was arrested for the first time by the NKVD (KGB). His second arrest was in April 1945, after which he was taken to Kiev's Lukianivska prison. Bishop Gregory remained an example for the Church of the bravery of a soldier of Christ, showing perseverance in God's truth in the most difficult moments of life.

He died a martyr for the faith in the infirmary of the NKVD prison in Kiev on December 28, 1945.

"At the Kiev prison the interrogations were conducted by Interrogator Dubok. He was a horrible sadist. He investigated my case too... This Dubok told me himself how he had killed the bishop: 'So you, Khomyshyn, spoke out against communism?' The bishop, as always, replied resolutely: 'I did and I will.' 'Did you fight against the Soviet authority?' 'Yes, I did and I will!' Then Dubok became outraged and grabbed some books written by the bishop, which lay on the table in front of him, and started cruelly beating his Excellency with them, on his head and everywhere else."

Kontakion of the Annunciation, from the Akathist to the Mother of God

"I am your own, O Mother of God!

To you, Protectress and Leader,

my songs of victory!

To you who saved me from danger,

my hymn of thanksgiving!

In your invincible might,

deliver me from all danger,

that I may sing to you:

'Hail, O Bride and Maiden ever-pure!'"



Father Bobkovych (right) chopping wood in a Siberian forest.

А ХТО ІС НАС ПОВЕРНЕТЬ НА УКРАЇНУ,
...КАЗІТЕ, ЧО ЗА НА НЕЙ БЄЕ ГІЛЛАБІ...



...And whichever of you returns to mother Ukraine, say that I gave up everything for her...
The funeral for a Ukrainian independence fighter, held in a labour camp. Inta, 1956.



A house in the village of the Khabarovsk area of Siberia, in which the families of three priests lived in exile: Fr. Kofliarchuk, Fr. Palisetskyl and Fr. Verhynovych.

Western Ukrainians "relaxing." Omsk region, Russia, 1950.

ARCHPASTOR ON THREE CONTINENTS



Bishop and martyr Nykyta Budka

was born on June 7, 1877 in the village of Dobromirka, Zbarazh District. In 1905, after finishing theological studies in Vienna and Innsbruck, he was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky. From the very beginning he gave great attention to the ministry for Ukrainian emigrants. The Holy See appointed him first bishop for Ukrainian Catholics in Canada in July 1912 and he was ordained bishop on October 14, 1912. In 1928, he returned to Lviv and became Vicar General of the Metroplitan Curia there.

On April 14, 1945, he was imprisoned together with other bishops and sent back to Lviv. Some time later he was the only cardinal to be placed in a labour camp. He died in a matter for the faith in Kozshchuk, near Lviv, on October 7, 1950.

"The nurse in the camp gave the following account: 'When patients died, their hospital gowns were removed. They placed the bodies in paper bags, numbered them and attached a card to the bag with personal data. Then they transported the bodies to the nearest forest where wild animals ate them.' According to the nurse's account the bishop foresaw his own death: 'By sunrise tomorrow I will not be here any more.' And that is what happened. To show his respect and to acknowledge the bishop's dignity, the camp guard left the prison clothes on the bishop's corpse. His remains were taken and left in the forest, just as was done with the bodies of his predecessors. Thinking about the goodness of this man of God, who had served his brothers to the last, many of the convicts got together the next morning to have a last look at this man who was the embodiment of angelic goodness for so many. But all they found was a piece of his shirt sleeve."

— From the words of Archbishop Volodymyr Sterniuk

ANGELIC BISHOP



Bishop and martyr Gregory Lakota

was born on January 31, 1883 in the village of Holodivka, Lviv Region. He studied Theology in Lviv. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1908 in Przemyśl (present-day Poland). In 1911, he received his Ph.D. in Theology in Vienna. In 1913, he became a professor at the Przemyśl seminary, later becoming its rector. On May 16, 1926, he was ordained to the episcopacy and was appointed auxiliary bishop of Przemyśl. On June 9, 1946, he was arrested and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. In exile in Vorkuta (Russia) he was distinguished for his great humaneness, his humility, his desire to take the most difficult labour on himself and to make the unbearable conditions of life easier for others.

He died a martyr for the faith on November 12, 1950 in the village of Abez near Vorkuta.

"Exiled to a labour camp, in the middle of human misery, I also met real angels in human bodies, who by their lives were the earthly representatives of the Cherubim, glorifying Christ, the King of Glory. Among them was the confessor of the faith, Gregory Lakota, auxiliary bishop of Przemyśl. From 1949 to 1950, by his example of Christian virtues his life witnessed to us who were weakened by life in the labour camp."

From the words of Bishop Volodymyr Sterniuk



"Tall, 180-185 centimetres, rather thin, with a long white beard, a little stooped, with a cane. Arms relaxed, calm, face and eyes friendly. He reminded me of Saint Nicholas ... We never expected such a rascal in our room ... Some sisters had passed three apples to him, real rosy, red and ripe. And he gave one apple to Roman Novosad, who often had stomach problems. He said: 'You need to take care of your stomach,' and the others he divided among us."

—from the memories of Roman Novosad

Priest and martyr Archimandrite (Abbot) Clement Sheptytsky.

the younger brother of the servant of God Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, was born on November 17, 1869 in the village of Prybychi, Yavoriv Region. He studied law in Munich and Paris and received a doctorate at the University of Krakow. He was a legate of the Austrian Parliament and member of the National Council. In 1912, he entered the Studite monastery as a late vocation; by so doing he renounced his successful secular career. He completed his theological studies in Innsbruck. On August 28, 1915, he was ordained to the priesthood. For many years he was the hegumen (prior) of the Studite monastery at Univ, and in 1944 he became the archimandrite (abbot). During World War II, he gave refuge to persecuted Jews. On June 5, 1947, he was arrested and sentenced to eight years' imprisonment by a special meeting of the NKVD (KGB) in Kiev.

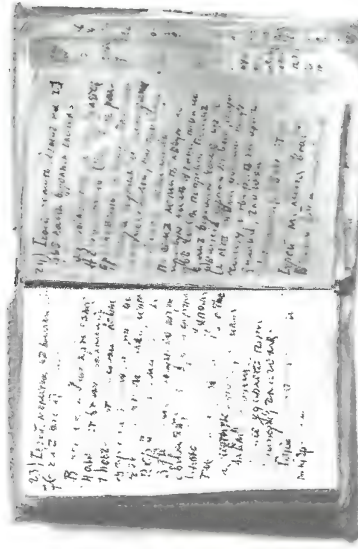
He died a martyr for the faith on May 1, 1951 in a harsh prison in Vladimir, Russia.

Apostles of the Gulag

The unbending faithfulness to Christ and His Church of confessor of the faith Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj and all the Greek Catholic hierarchy, their deep certainty in the victory over evil and their special witness of fidelity to the Roman Apostolic See served as an inspiring example and supported the faith and hope of laity and clergy alike who had avoided arrest and exile and had not spent time in prison.

"What a blessing this Siberia has already been for us all, for all the followers of Christ, for the growth and the life of Christ's kingdom. This place, once barren, today is soaked with the bloody sweat of prisoners and the unconquered sons of an enslaved nation. Not only laments and curses have come forth from this alien land surrounded by snow and frost. Words of calm and sincere prayer have also gone up to the Almighty and continue to go up to this day. For a number of years now, from various corners and caves the new sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ has been offered. A spiritual school has been born and thrives which helps in the upbringing of new ministers of Christ. This very Siberian land has seen a truly new human being, true Christians, true and faithful sons of Christ's Church..."

—Excerpt from a letter of Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj from exile, February 17, 1961



A hand-written prayer book which priests of the UGCC used during underground liturgies.

Priest and martyr Father **Nicholas Tsehelskyi**

was born on December 17, 1896 in the village of Strusiv, Ternopil Region. In 1923, he graduated from the theological faculty of Lviv University. On April 5, 1925, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky ordained him to the priesthood. He was a zealous priest who cared for the spirituality, education and welfare of his parishioners. After the war he was repressed by the Bolsheviks because he refused to convert to Orthodoxy. Father drank deep from the bitter cup of intimidation, threats and beatings. On October 28, 1946, he was arrested and on January 27, 1947 he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. He was deported to Mordovia (Russia), but his wife, three children and daughter-in-law were taken to Russia's Chita region. He lived in extremely horrid conditions, in a camp that was notoriously strict and cruel. He suffered from severe pain due to illness, but this did not break his strong spirit.

He died a martyr for the faith on May 25, 1951 and is buried in the camp cemetery.



"My dearest wife: the feast of the Dormition was our 25th wedding anniversary. I recall fondly our family life together, and every day in my dreams I am with you and the children, and this makes me happy ... I give a fatherly kiss to all their foreheads and I hope to live honestly, behaving blamelessly, keeping far from everything that is foul. I pray for this most of all."

— from the letters of Fr. Nicholas Tsehelskyi
 written to his Mordovia

O Holy Mother of God,

Mary, full of grace,

the Lord is with you.

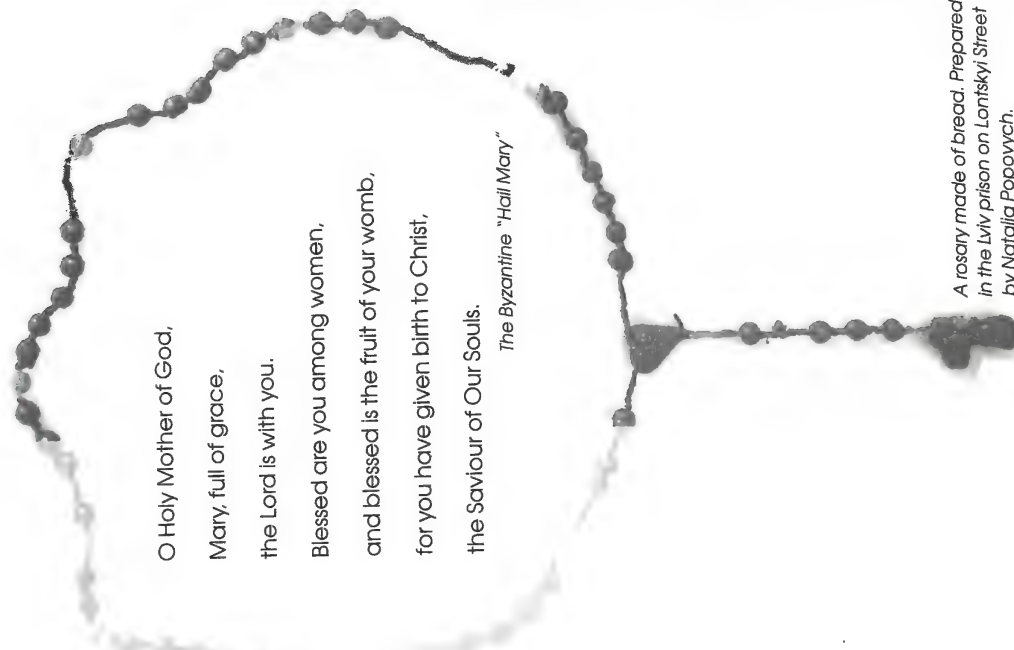
Blessed are you among women,

and blessed is the fruit of your womb,

for you have given birth to Christ,

the Saviour of Our Souls.

The Byzantine "Hail Mary"



A rosary made of bread. Prepared in the Lviv prison on Lantskyi Street by Natalia Popowych.

SUFFERED ON GOOD FRIDAY



Priest and martyr Father

I v a n Z i a t y k

was born on December 26, 1899 in the village of Odrekhova, near Stanok. After finishing his theology studies in Przemyśl seminary in 1923, he was ordained to the priesthood. In 1935, he entered the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists). He was a teacher of Dogmatic Theology and Holy Scripture, and also known as a good administrator. During the Nazi occupation, he was acting superior of the monastery in Ternopil and later in Zboiska near Lviv. After the official liquidation of the UGCC and the exile of Protohegumen Joseph de Vocht, Father Ivan took on his duties. On January 5, 1950, he was arrested, found guilty of "preaching the ideas of the Pope of Rome regarding the spread of the Catholic faith among nations of the whole world." At first he was imprisoned in Zolochiv and later was sent to Ozerlag, Irkutsk region, Russia. In all, he lived through 72 interrogations.

On Good Friday in 1952, he was severely beaten, drenched with water and left to lie in the cold. He died in the prison infirmary on May 17, 1952, a martyr for the faith.

"He stood and prayed the whole day; for whole days he prayed every moment. He was such a pleasant person to talk to. You could hear many wise and instructive words from him; this was especially so in my case, as at that time I was a youngster."

- From an interview with fellow prisoner Anatolii Medelian

A MOTHER TO HER SISTERS

Nun and martyr Sister

O l y m p i a B i d a

was born in 1903 in the village of Tsebliv, Lviv Region. At a young age she entered the congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. In 1938, she was assigned to the town of Khyriv where she became superior of the house. After the establishment of the Soviet regime she and the other sisters suffered a number of attacks on the convent. She, nevertheless, continued to care for children, to catechize, to organise underground religious services (often without a priest). In 1950, she was arrested by soldiers of the NKVD (KGB) and taken to a hard labour camp in Boryslav. Eventually she was sentenced to lifelong exile in the Tomsk region of Siberia for "anti-Soviet activities." Even in exile, Sr Olympia tried to perform her duties as superior. She was a support for her fellow sisters. She patiently endured inhuman living conditions.

She died a martyr's death on January 23, 1952.



"God Almighty, God's Providence will not allow His little children to perish in a foreign land. For He is with us here, in the midst of these forests and waters. He doesn't forget about us... Because of our faith, because of a divine matter, we suffer, and what could be better than this? ... Let's follow Him bravely. Not only when all is well, but even when times are bitter, let us say: Glory to God in all matters."

- From Sister Olympia's letter to her principal superior, Sister Neofyta



"The NKVD agents attacked our convent. They spent a long time breaking down the door. It was night-time; the sisters were terrified. Sister Lavrentia ran to the cellar and escaped into the garden through a little window. A cold rain started to fall. When the NKVD broke into the house they immediately noticed the open window and ran to look for her. It was dark and with their bayonets they poked every hush. A few times the bayonet was right in front of Sister's eyes. Not finding her, the NKVD went away, but Sister was out in the rain until the morning. She came to the house exhausted and frozen. After this incident she got seriously ill, lay in bed. They took her to prison when she was infirm."

From the memoirs of a witness, Sister Lavrentia

Nun and martyr Sister **Lavrentia Herasymiv**

was born on September 30, 1911 in the village of Rudyky, Lviv Region. In 1931, she entered the congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Tsebliv. In 1933, she made her first vows. In 1938 she went to the house in Khyriv with Sister Olympia and the lives of both were to remain intertwined until their deaths. In 1950, she was arrested by the agents of the NKVD and sent to Boryslav. Eventually, together with her fellow sister, she was sentenced to lifelong exile in the Tomsk region. She was sick with tuberculosis when she arrived at her designated place of exile and so only one family would agree to give her a roof over her head. This was in a room where a paralysed man lay behind a partition. She prayed a great deal and performed various forms of manual labour. She patiently endured inhuman living conditions and the lack of medical attention.

She died on August 28, 1952 as a martyr for the faith in the village of Kharsk in Siberia's Tomsk Region.

Priest and martyr Msgr.

Peter Verhun

was born on November 18, 1890 in Horodok, Lviv Region. He held a Ph.D. in Philosophy. On October 30, 1927, he was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky at St. George's Cathedral and was appointed to be the pastor and later the Apostolic Visitor for Ukrainian Catholics in Germany. Priests and all the faithful, whom fate had brought to a foreign land, gravitated to Father Peter because they felt he was a good shepherd who would give his life for his sheep. In June 1945, he was arrested by the Soviet security services in Berlin and sent to Siberia, where he was sentenced to eight years of hard labour. But even there, amid unbearable living conditions, he knew how to gather the faithful around him, giving his own personal example of perseverance in the faith.

He died as a martyr for the faith on February 7, 1957 in exile in the village of Angarskoie, in the Krasnoyarsk territory.



"My life is very monotonous. I have enough to eat. I cook for myself. My greatest joy is that I can pray every day without disturbances ... Finally I don't need anything. I feel that my head is tending little by little to my eternal rest. But I really would rather die in the monastery."

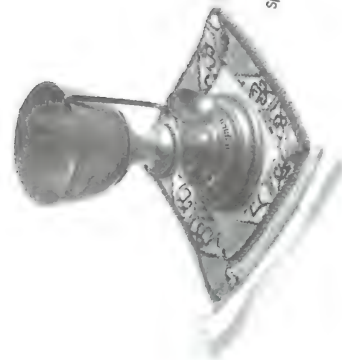
- From the letters of Father Verhun written in Siberian exile

Light in the catacombs

Stalin's death in March 1953 and Khrushchev's "thaw" began a new period in the way of the cross of the UGCC: the catacombs. The main protagonists of this period of the Church's life were the bishops, priests, monks, nuns and faithful who had returned home from the camps and exile. Having survived unspeakable physical and moral tortures, they encountered a different western Ukraine: bloodless, frightened by the terror, deceived by the atheist-communist ideology. However, in spite of all that it was still alive and waiting for the Resurrection. These people who knew how to preserve in their hearts faith in Christ and faithfulness to their Church became little islands around which the gradual renewal of church structures began. Thanks to the unbending character of the martyr bishops, the perseverance of the clergy and the faithfulness of the laity, the UGCC survived the period of official liquidation, organised the underground and gave birth to a new generation of church leaders. For almost half a century it was the largest illegal Christian community in the world and at the same time the largest organism of social opposition to the totalitarian system of the USSR.

"And so take up every divine weapon so that you can stand fast during the storms and, overcoming everything, survive. Stand up, therefore, girdling your thigh with truth and clothing yourself with the armour of justice ... But above all take in your hands the shield of faith, with which you will be able to defeat the fiery arrows of the Evil One. And take up the helmet of salvation and the spiritual sword, which is the Word of God."

- From a letter of Metropolitan Josyf Slipyi, written in exile, February 17, 1961



A hand-made chalice, cover and communion spoon, prepared in exile for underground liturgies.

"O, Lord,

You have displayed supreme wisdom

and great love in the distinction of your
graces,

when You placed the martyrs among the
choirs of angels."

From the Byzantine-rite Funeral Service





"That was in 1957 during Lent, on Palm Sunday. Almost the whole village was waiting for him. There were even people who went to the Orthodox church who hadn't made their confession; they were still waiting... And they waited till he came. When we told them that Fr. Zarytskyi was here, everyone came to us to confess. Confessions started in the evening and lasted almost to the morning. At dawn, Father celebrated the Divine Liturgy. Very many people took advantage of the opportunity: young and old. They got married, children were baptized. Father Zarytskyi stayed with us the whole summer. But on September 21 he had to leave for Karaganda. He had to return because they were waiting for him there..."

Portrait interview with Sister Katerina Zarytska

Priest and martyr Father Oleksii Zarytskyi

was born in 1912 in the village of Bilche, Lviv Region. From 1931 to 1934, he studied at the Lviv Theological Academy. He was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky in 1936. During his ministry in the village of Strutyn near Zolochiv he gained the special favour of his parishioners. In 1948, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in the camps of Siberia and Kazakhstan for refusing to convert to Orthodoxy. After his rehabilitation in 1957, he returned to western Ukraine a number of times but again returned to the east. Amid inhuman conditions, Father had a huge opportunity to provide pastoral ministry to people living in a foreign land. He tirelessly took care not only of Ukrainians but of Poles, Germans and Russians, Greek and Roman Catholics. He visited Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj in exile. He was sentenced a second time: two years for "vagrancy." The guardian of children, youth, the poor, he will forever remain in people's memory an example of the embodiment in life of the commandments to love God and neighbour.

He died a martyr for the faith on October 30, 1963 in a labour camp in a village in Karaganda. His mortal remains were reburied in 1990 in the village of Riasna-Ruska near Lviv.

Bishop and martyr Nicholas Charnetskyi

was born on September 14, 1884 in the village of Semakivtsi, Stanislaviv (Ivano-Frankivsk) Region. After he completed his studies at the local seminary and in Rome he was ordained to the priesthood in 1909. He obtained his doctorate in Dogmatic Theology from Rome and became a spiritual director and professor at the seminary in Stanislaviv (Ivano-Frankivsk). In 1919, he entered the novitiate of the Redemptorist Fathers in Lviv and in 1926 he was appointed Apostolic Visitor for the Eastern Catholic Rite in Poland (outside Galicia). A model religious and missionary, he zealously worked for the union of the Holy Church. He was ordained to the episcopacy by Bishop Gregory Khomyshyn in Rome on February 2, 1931. He was arrested by the NKVD (KGB) on April 11, 1945 and sentenced to six years of hard labour in Siberia. According to official data he underwent 600 hours of interrogation and torture and spent time in 30 different prisons and camps. By 1956 he had become terminally ill and was permitted to return to western Ukraine where he secretly continued to fulfil his episcopal obligations. In the midst of the cruelty and oppression which he suffered in imprisonment and in exile, he was distinguished for his evangelical patience, gentleness and limitless goodness: already during his life he was considered a saint.

As a consequence of his sufferings he died a martyr for the faith on April 2, 1959 in Lviv.



"I saw him. He was a very humble person. The first time I came for instruction from the bishop, he was sweeping the house. I wanted to help him, to take the broom, but he wouldn't let me. He himself swept. 'Have a seat,' he said. I was embarrassed that the bishop was sweeping, but I was sitting, because he wouldn't let me. He told how many priests who had signed over to Orthodoxy came to him to confess... nearly 300 priests, they repented and came to him."

Portrait interview with Sister Katerina Zarytska

DISCRETE MEMBER OF THE UNDERGROUND

Bishop and martyr Simeon Lukach

was born on July 7, 1893 in the village of Starunka, Stanislaviv (Ivano-Frankivsk) Region. In 1913, he entered the seminary. He finished the seminary in Stanislaviv and was ordained a priest in 1919. In December 1920, he was appointed professor of Moral Theology at the seminary where he had earlier studied. He secretly received episcopal ordination in the spring of 1945 before the arrest of Bishop Gregory Khomyshyn. On October 26, 1949, he was arrested by the Soviet secret police. Sentenced in August 1950 to 10 years of imprisonment, he carried out hard labour in a lumber camp in Krasnoyarsk. He was freed on February 11, 1955 and returned to his native land. In July 1962, he was arrested for a second time and was sentenced to 5 years in a severe camp. During his interrogations he showed his unbroken perseverance, his discretion and faithfulness to the Catholic Church. In March 1964, because of his critical condition, tuberculosis of the lungs, he was taken to his native village, Starunka.

He died a martyr for the faith on August 22, 1964.



"I celebrated Divine Liturgy in an apartment and in a few houses. From one to thirty people took part in the services ... I also baptized and celebrated marriages ... But conscience does not allow me to mention their names, so that my mistake will not cause those people who sought spiritual help from me to suffer. I acted in good faith, serving God's will, so I was in danger of colliding with state laws. If the state finds me guilty, I myself will take the responsibility."

—From the autobiography in the court case written after his arrest in 1949

UNBROKEN "CONVERSATIONALIST"

Bishop and martyr Ivan Slezivuk

was born on January 14, 1896 in the village of Zhyvachiv, Stanislaviv (Ivano-Frankivsk) Region. After graduating from the eparchial seminary in 1923, he was ordained to the priesthood. He served as a catechist and spiritual director in Ivano-Frankivsk. In April of 1945, Bishop Gregory Khomyshyn secretly ordained him a bishop. On June 2, 1945, Bishop Ivan was arrested and a year later he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. He served his sentence in camps in Vorkuta and Mordovia, Russia. Released from prison, he returned to Stanislaviv and carried out the duties of administrator of the eparchy. In 1962, he was arrested for the second time, together with Bishop Simeon Lukach and he was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment in harsh camps. After his release in 1968, he ordained Basilian Father Sofron Dmyterko a bishop. Bishop Sofron succeeded him in guiding the eparchy.

In his final years, Bishop Ivan was often called to the KGB for regular "conversations." After one of these "conversations" he fell ill and never recovered. He died a martyr for the faith on December 2, 1973 in Ivano-Frankivsk.



"As the deceased himself said, they locked him in a separate isolated area, no one visited him. He stayed there for two hours. Then they told him: 'You're free to go.' It was difficult for him to walk because, as he himself said, after this he felt dizzy, as if he had a fever, his skin was burning. The Sisters of St. Vincent, who helped him out, also said that the bishop returned from this 'conversation' with a very red face, he felt exhausted, stayed in bed and died two weeks later. There was and still is a suspicion that the KGB used radiation to get rid of one more Ukraine bishop."

—From the testimony of Bishop Sofron Dmyterko



"After many years spent in prisons and labour camps, how pleasant it is to be free with my fellow Ukrainians. What joy to go to pray freely in a Ukrainian church, where no one will send you to the camps or prison because of your prayers ... The prisons and camps ruined my health and my strength, but this was my fate, the Lord God placed this cross on my shoulders."

- Basil, the last speech of Bishop Basil to the faithful in Canada, June 17, 1989

Bishop and martyr

Basil Velychkovskiy

was born June 1, 1903 in Stanislaviv (Ivano-Frankivsk). In 1920, he entered the seminary in Lviv. In 1925, in Holosko, near Lviv, he took his first religious vows in the Order of the Most Holy Redeemer and was ordained a priest. Fr. Basil became a missionary in Volyn. In 1942, he became the hegumen (prior) of the monastery in Ternopil, where he was arrested in 1945. He was then taken to Kiev. His death sentence was soon commuted to ten years of imprisonment and hard labour. He returned to Lviv in 1955, where he continued his pastoral work. In 1963, he was secretly ordained an archbishop in a Moscow hotel by Metropolitan Josyf Slipyi. The metropolitan, who was on his way to exile in Rome, gave Archbishop Basil responsibility for the catacomb Church. Predicting his own possible arrest, he ordained new underground bishops in 1964, among whom was his successor, Archbishop Volodymyr Sterniuk, who eventually led the Church out of the underground. In 1969, Bishop Basil was arrested a second time but after three years of imprisonment he was deported outside the USSR.

He died in Winnipeg, Canada on June 30, 1973 as a consequence of serious heart disease which began when he was in prison.

Massive procession of the faithful of the UGCC to St. George's Cathedral to demand the Church's legalization and the return of its sanctuaries. Lviv, September 17, 1989.



In place of an epilogue

The Metropolitan lay calmly with eyes shut and breathed with difficulty, as he had before. Then he started to pray again. He opened his eyes and began to speak to us:

"Our Church will be ruined, destroyed by the Bolsheviks, but you will hold on. Do not renounce the faith, the Catholic Church. A difficult trial will fall on our Church, but this will pass. I see the rebirth of our Church: it will be more beautiful, more glorious than of old, and it will embrace all our people. Ukraine," the metropolitan continued, "will rise again from her destruction and will become a mighty state, united, great, comparable to other highly-developed countries. Peace, well-being, happiness, a lofty culture, mutual love and harmony will rule here. It will all be as I say. It is only necessary to pray that the Lord God and the Mother of God will care for our poor, tired people, who have suffered so much, and that God's care will last forever."

- From an interview with Father Joseph Kladochnyl about Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky's last moments of earthly life

Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, a great spiritual authority and the head of the UGCC from 1901 to 1944, is pictured left.

Stories of the Blessed

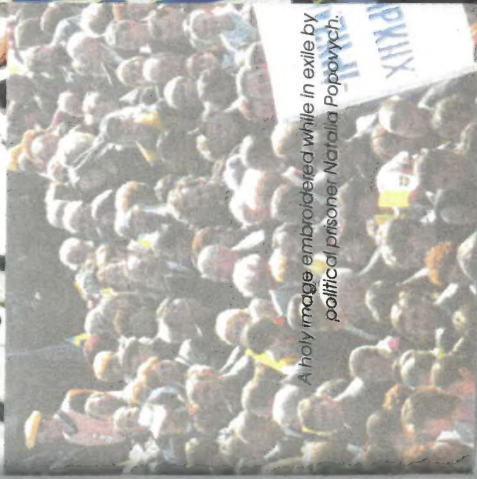
Sister Josphata Hordashevska	7
Priest and martyr Father Leonid Feodorov	8
Priest and martyr Father Nicholas Kontad	11
Martyr Volodymyr Pryima	12
Priest and martyr Father Andrew Ishchak	13
Priest and martyr Father Severian Baranyk	14
Priest and martyr Father Joachim Senkivskyi	16
Priest and martyr Father Zynovii Kovalyk	17
Priest and martyr Father Emilian Kowcz	20
Nun and martyr Sister Tarsykila Matskiv	23
Priest and martyr Father Vitalis Bairak	24
Priest and martyr Father Roman Lyko	25
Bishop and martyr Gregory Khomyshyn	29
Bishop and martyr Theodore Romzha	30
Bishop and martyr Josaphat Kotsylovskyi	31
Bishop and martyr Nykyta Budka	34
Bishop and martyr Gregory Lakota	35
Priest and martyr Archimandrite (Abbot) Clement Sheptytsky	36
Priest and martyr Father Nicholas Tsehelskyi	39
Priest and martyr Father Ivan Ziatyk	40
Nun and martyr Sister Olympia Bida	41
Nun and martyr Sister Lavrentia Herasymiv	42
Priest and martyr Msgr. Peter Verhun	43
Priest and martyr Father Oleksii Zarytskyi	46
Bishop and martyr Nicholas Charnetskyi	47
Bishop and martyr Simeon Lukach	48
Bishop and martyr Ivan Sleziuk	49
Bishop and martyr-Basil Velychkovskyi	50



The Pope blesses the location
of the developing Ukrainian
Catholic University in Lviv,
June 26, 2001.



A holy image embroidered while in exile by
political prisoner Natalia Popowych.





An altar kit of the underground church, given to Pope John Paul II when he was in Lviv on June 27, 2001.



Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, head of the UGCC, celebrated a Byzantine-rite Liturgy in which the blessed martyrs of the UGCC were beatified. Lviv, June 27, 2001.



The biographies of the new blessed and martyrs were compiled on the basis of materials of the Postulation Centre for the Beatification and Canonization of Saints of the UGCC and the archives of the Institute of Church History at the Ukrainian Catholic University. The illustrations used in this book were taken from original photographs and museum pieces from the collection of the Institute of Church History and prepared by Natalia Senkivska. The photos from the visit of Pope John Paul II to Ukraine are from the Office of Information and External Relations of the Ukrainian Catholic University.

For further information on the Institute of Church History and Ukrainian Catholic University:

Websites: www.ichistory.org and www.uccu.edu.ua
E-mail: info@uccu.edu.ua

Науково-популярне видання

ЦЕРКВА МУЧЕНИКІВ

Упорядник
Олег Турій

Літературний редактор
Марія Чайка

Богословський редактор
Тарас Шманько

Художній редактор
Олена Гижа

Технічний редактор
Роман Скиба

Підп. до друку 15.03.2002. Формат 60x84/16. Папір офс. Офс. друк.
Ум.-друк. арк. 0,0. Ум. фарбовідб. 0,0. Обл.-вид. арк. 0,0.
Вид. № 10. Зам.

Монастир Свято-Іванівська Лавра
Видавничий відділ «Свчхад»
79008, Львів, а/с 808, вул. Винниченка, 22
тел. (0322) 74-23-09, тел./факс. 97-16-33
e-mail: svichado@mail.lviv.ua, url: www.svichado.lviv.ua

CHURCH OF THE MARTYRS

General Editor
Oleh Turij

Literary Editor
Marla Chaika

Theological Editor
Taras Shmanko

Artistic Design
Olena Hyzha

Technical Editor
Roman Skyba

Translator
Matthew Matuszak

Підп. до друку 15.03.2002. Формат 60x84/16. Папір офс. Офс. друк.
Ум.-друк. арк. 3,5. Ум. фарбовідб. 3,9. Обл.-вид. арк. 8,4.
Вид. № 10. Зам.

St. John's Monastery
Publishing Division Svichado
a/c 808, Vul. Vynnychenka, 22
79008, Lviv, Ukraine
e-mail: post@svichado.com, url: www.svichado.com



Aid to the Church in Need

Aid to the Church in Need supports the faithful wherever they are persecuted, oppressed or in pastoral need. At work across Eastern Europe and throughout the world, the Catholic charity is committed to continuing its support for the Church in Ukraine.

Seminarians are trained

Priests and religious are supported

Churches and chapels are built and restored

Religious programmes are broadcast

Bibles and religious literature are printed

Refugees are helped

Over 40 million of ACN's Child's Bibles
have been printed in at least 140 languages.

Aid to the Church in Need

Registered Charity No. 1097984

1 Times Square, Salford, Greater Manchester, M6 6PU

Telephone: 020 8642 8668

Website: www.acnuk.org

Email: acn@acnuk.org

This publication is sponsored by

Aid to the Church in Need.